

## **Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI)**

### **Basin Shield Commercial Thinning and Density Management**

Swiftwater Field Office, Roseburg District  
EA# OR-104-06-09

The proposed density management would occur on five units (approximately 122 acres) of mid-seral forest of 39 to 43 year-old second-growth forest located in the Upper Umpqua Fifth-Field Watershed in Sections 17 & 18, T. 24 S., R. 07 W., W.M. Within these 122 acres, approximately two acres would be removed for the development of roads and temporary spurs and 0.10 acres would be subsoiled and blocked after use.

This project is within the General Forest Management Area (GFMA), Riparian Reserve (RR), and Late-Successional Reserve Land Use Allocations and would contribute 1,563 million board feet of timber for harvest in the Roseburg District *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP, p. 8).

#### **Test for Significant Impacts.**

1. Has significant impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (1))?

( ) Yes                      (✓) No

**Remarks:** Any impacts would be consistent with the range and scope of those effects analyzed and described in the Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/EIS).

2. Has significant adverse impacts on public health or safety (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (2))?

( ) Yes                      (✓) No

**Remarks:** The increase in fuel loadings in the unit would not dramatically increase the fire risk to the area for several reasons (Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan EA, pg. 16):

- scattered tops and limbs would decrease the recreational off-highway vehicle use in the areas accessible to the public which is a source of ignition for wildfires;
- the scattered slash would suppress underbrush which could increase risk;
- although the proposed unit is located within the Wildland Urban Interface boundary described in the Roseburg District Fire Management Plan, homes in the area currently have at least 30 feet of defensible space (K. Kosel, 2006, pers. obs.); and
- most of the fine fuels, less than 1 inch diameter, would degrade within two years after harvest which would dramatically decrease the risk of a fire building in intensity to consume larger diameter fuels.

Treatment of logging slash by burning slash piles has the potential to affect air quality locally. Burning would be accomplished under guidelines established by the Oregon Smoke Management Plan and Visibility Protection Plan to avoid adverse effects. Any impacts to local air quality would be localized and of short duration, consistent with the range and scope of those effects analyzed and described in the Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/EIS, pp. 4-9 to 4-12).

3. Adversely effects such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains or ecologically significant or critical areas including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (3))?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Remarks:** Unique geographic characteristics (such as those listed above) are absent from the project area and would not be affected.

4. Has highly controversial effects on the quality of the human environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (4))?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Remarks:** Public comments provided information that helped in the formulation of the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan decision (October 8, 2003) and is reflected in both that decision (pgs. 3-9) and in the Project Design Features for the Basin Shield Commercial Thinning and Density Management project (Basin Shield Decision Record, pgs. 6-12). However, no comments were received that are considered highly controversial.

5. Has highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks to the human environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (5))?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Remarks:** The risks to the human environment were analyzed and found not to be highly uncertain or unique (Basin Shield Decision Record, Table. 2, pgs. 16-23).

6. Establishes a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (6))?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Remarks:** The advertisement, auction, and award of a timber sale contract allowing the harvest of trees is a well-established practice and would not establish a precedent for future actions.

7. Is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (7))?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Remarks:** The cumulative impacts were analyzed and found not to be

significant (Basin Shield Decision Record, Table 2, pgs. 16-23).

8. Has adverse effects on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (8))?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Remarks:** The BLM conducted surveys (July, 2006) for cultural resources and completed Section 106 responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act, in accordance with the 1998 Oregon State Historic Preservation Office protocols (Basin Shield Decision Record, pg. 16). No cultural resources were discovered. It has been determined that there would be no effect to scientific, cultural, or historical resources (Basin Shield Decision Record, pg. 16).

9. May adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (9))?

|                   |                           |                                     |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Botanical Species | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| Fish Species      | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| Wildlife Species  | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |

**Remarks:** Surveys did not identify the presence of any federally threatened or endangered plants; therefore this action has no effect on listed botanical species (Basin Shield Decision Record, Table 2, pgs. 16-23).

There is currently no listed, or proposed for listing, fish species in the Roseburg District (Decision Record, Table 2, pg. 17).

There is Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for Coho salmon or Chinook salmon. However, conservation measures incorporated into the project design features would prevent adverse effects to EFH. Therefore, there are no further consultation obligations with the National Marine Fisheries Service District (Basin Shield Decision Record, Table 2, pgs. 17).

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has been completed for the federally threatened northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet and for spotted owl critical habitat and marbled murrelet critical habitat (Basin Shield Decision Record, Table 2, pgs. 18-23).

A Letter of Concurrence was received from the USFWS (*Reinitiation of consultation on Roseburg District Bureau of Land Management FY 2005-2008 Management Activities* [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511]) dated June 24, 2005 which concurred with the Roseburg District's conclusion that the proposed commercial thinning or density management activities are not likely to adversely affect Northern spotted owls and are not

likely to adversely affect the Northern spotted owl as a result of disturbance (pgs. 19-20). The USFWS also concurred with the Roseburg District's conclusion that the proposed commercial thinning and density management activities are not likely to adversely affect the marbled murrelet within Zone 1 (pgs. 8-11, Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511).

Project design features (Basin Shield Decision Record, pgs. 6-12) would be implemented in compliance with the letters of concurrence.

10. Threatens to violate Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (10))?

( ) Yes                      (✓) No

**Remarks:** The measures described above insure that Basin Shield Commercial Thinning and Density Management would be consistent with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws. The impacts of the silvicultural treatment on the human environment would not exceed those anticipated by the Roseburg District PRMP/EIS.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13212, the BLM must consider the effects of this decision on the President's National Energy Policy. Within the project area, there are no known energy resources with commercial potential. There are no pipelines, electrical transmission lines, or energy producing or processing facilities. As a consequence, there would be no known adverse effect on National Energy Policy.

Based on the analysis of potential impacts contained in the environmental assessment, I have determined that Basin Shield Commercial Thinning and Density Management would not have a significant impact on the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and that an environmental impact statement is not required. I have determined that the effects of the silvicultural treatment would be within those anticipated and already analyzed in the *Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* (PRMP/EIS, 1994) and would be in conformance with the *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP) for the Roseburg District, approved by the Oregon/Washington State Director on June 2, 1995.

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Marci L. Todd, Field Manager  
Swiftwater Field Office

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Date